



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

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Part	Section	Subject	Policy No.	Review Date
Institutional Operations	Security and Control	Control of Contraband	3.1.1	
ACA Standards	3-ALDF: 3A-18 Search of Facilities and Inmates to Control Contraband; 3A-19 Body Cavity Inspection Must be Performed by Health Care Personnel; 3A-20 Body Cavity Inspection Must be Authorized			
Consent Decree	Paragraph 54 Develop Facility Policies and Procedures			

I. PURPOSE

To establish search methods and procedures for use by corrections officers in the Department of Corrections (DOC) on inmates/detainees, cells, visitors, and other areas of the facility.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the DOC to use efficient and effective search techniques to deter inmates/detainees from manufacturing and/or, introducing contraband, to discover or detect breaches in facility security and to provide a safe environment for inmates/detainees, visitors, and staff.

III. DEFINITIONS

Cell Search: Is a systematic physical examination of cells to detect weapons, contraband, regulation violations, and health hazards.

Chain of Custody Receipt: Is a form used by DOC indicating that an officer confiscated evidence, identified it, placed it in a locked or protected area, and retrieved the evidence to be offered on the day of the trial.

Contraband: Includes weapons, explosives, drugs or drug paraphernalia, controlled medication, escape devices, intoxicants, gambling paraphernalia, money/negotiable instruments in excessive amount (\$20.00) and other items which are not authorized or approved by the Commissioner and or Director of Corrections.

Reasonable Suspicion: Is defined as a "subjective suspicion supported by objective, articulable facts, that would reasonably lead an experienced and prudent correctional officer to suspect an individual is carrying contraband."

Personal Search: Is to examine the inmate's/detainee's body and look through his/her personal apparel to uncover items not permitted in the facility.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Purpose of Search

Reasons for searches include but are not limited to the following:

1. To detect contraband, the manufacture of weapons, and escape devices inside the facility.
2. To prevent escapes.
3. To prevent assaults on staff and other inmates with a weapon.
4. To discover and prevent "trafficking" between employees and inmates/detainees.
5. To prevent health hazards.
6. To protect inmates from themselves (suicide).
7. To communicate a strong message that contraband will be found. And will not be tolerated.
8. To protect yourself and fellow staff members.
9. To discourage theft or destruction of facility property.
10. To enforce rules and regulations designed to eliminate causes of tension between inmates/detainees.

B. Admission Searches

As soon as the inmate/detainee arrives at the Booking area, the booking officer will conduct a preliminary pat down or frisk search to ensure that no weapons and/or contraband are introduced into the Booking area.

Mechanical device such as hand-held metal detector may be use to assist the officer in detecting weapons and/or other metal objects.

C. Body Searches

The following are basic rules for conducting body searches:

1. Be systematic.
2. Be thorough.
3. Be objective.
4. Work from top to bottom.

5. Take your time and concentrate.

6. Prevent - don't punish.

D. Frisk or Pat Down Search

Corrections officers shall take precautionary measures to ensure that they are not injured from sharp objects such as needles and blades during the search process.

1. Be sure that no other inmate/detainee is in the room when the search takes place so that no contraband is passed by the new inmate/detainee to one already searched.
2. Have the inmate/detainee remove all items in his pockets and placed them in an area away from where the search will be conducted.
3. Instruct the inmate/detainee to stand still with his/her feet apart and his/her arms extended outward or on the wall and not to move until so instructed. This position should not be construed as cruelty, but as an advantageous position for the officer should the inmate/detainee suddenly display violent tendencies.
4. The corrections officer standing to the rear with his/her leg between the inmate's/detainee's legs is the preferred method in frisk search.
5. From behind, using both hands, start at the forehead (hairline) and run fingers or a large-toothed comb through the inmate's/detainee's hair. Long hair is often used to conceal contraband.
6. Run the inmate's/detainee's collar between your fingers feeling for any hidden items, such as wire, blades, paper, etc. The correction officer must use his/her hands to feel and probe all around the neck, shoulders, chest, arms, armpits, back, stomach and beltline.
7. Run your hands down the front of the shirt checking the breast pockets and seams stopping at the inmate's/detainee's beltline. Check the back of belt, large belt buckles, and items taped to flat area or sewn into seams. Do not allow the inmate/detainee to unbuckle his/her own belt since the buckle may be used as a weapon.
8. From the waistline proceed down the legs, using both hands on one leg, then the other. Pay close attention to the seams down the side of the trousers. Follow up by running hands up the leg, buttocks and groin area. Pay close attention as articles may be taped in those areas.
9. Observe both feet especially between toes and under the feet for taped articles.
10. Request the inmate/detainee to turn around and open his/her mouth wide to inspect inside the mouth and under the tongue. Check inside the nostrils and both ears.

11. Check all objects such as cigarettes, small packages, matchbooks, wigs and other items. Check shoe tops, cuffs and socks.

E. Strip Search

During strip search, the correction officer shall remain in visual contact with the inmate/detainee at all times. This is to prevent the inmate/detainee from disposing of contraband. The strip search will be conducted out of the presence of other inmates/detainees, preferably in a private room.

The following procedures may be used as a guide when conducting the strip search:

1. Instruct the inmate/detainee to face forward, take off his/her shoes, and hand them to you one at a time. Turn the shoes upside down, shake them out, and bang the heels against the floor to determine if they are hollow.
2. Instruct the inmate/detainee to remove socks and turn them inside out. Often socks are used to conceal money or other items.
3. Instruct the inmate/detainee to remove his trousers and underwear, or skirt and underwear, and turn them inside out. Tell the inmate/detainee to remove shirt and undershirt, or blouse and bra, and to pass them to you for examination.
4. Once the inmate/detainee has completely undressed, examine the inmate's/detainee's body for tape or bandages that may conceal injuries or contraband. If bandages are removed, they should be replaced with clean ones before the search continues.
5. Give the inmate/detainee a wide-tooth comb and tell the inmate's/detainee's to comb his/her hair. Shine a flashlight to detect lice or contraband. Ask the inmate/detainee to bend down and shake out the hair.
6. From the side, using a flashlight, look into the inmate's/detainee's ear. Instruct inmate/detainee to pull the left ear down and let it up so you can look behind the ear. Follow the same procedure with the right ear.
7. Instruct inmate/detainee to open his/her mouth wide, shine the flashlight inside the mouth and ask to wiggle tongue back and forth.
8. Instruct inmate/detainee to face you and tilt the head up so nostrils can be checked.
9. Instruct inmate/detainee to lift arms and examine armpit area for lice and contraband.
10. Have inmate/detainee open his/her hands and examine palms, between fingers and backside of hands.

11. Examine the pubic area for lice by using a flashlight. On males, request the individual to lift his testicles and penis for examination. On females, request the individual to spread her legs, using a flashlight, do a visual examination. In the event the officer finds an article or object in the vagina, DO NOT ATTEMPT to withdraw or remove the item. Call a medical doctor or a medical professional to withdraw or remove the item or object out of the vagina. A female officer shall conduct female strip searches.

12. Order the inmate/detainee to turn around, bend over, and spread buttocks so the rectum can be examined. The flashlight can be used for this purpose so that it is not necessary for the officer to touch the inmate/detainee. In the event the officer finds an article or object in the rectum, DO NOT ATTEMPT to withdraw or remove the item. Call a medical doctor or a medical professional to withdraw or remove the item or object out of the rectum.

13. Identify and record on the booking report bruises, other injuries, and identifying marks, such as tattoos, scars, and birthmarks.

14. Instruct inmate/detainee to raise one foot at a time, so that the bottom of each foot can be checked for drugs or razors between toes.

15. Ask inmate/detainee if he/she wears dentures or contact lenses. If dentures are worn, ask the inmate/detainee to take them out so that they can be examined. It has been found that drugs and money have been found in dentures. Remind the inmate/detainee that it is his/her responsibility to care for dentures. If contact lenses are worn, remind the inmate/detainee that it is his/her responsibility to care for the lenses. Record this information on the booking report.

F. Cell Search

Prior to doing a cell search, assemble the tools and equipment to assist you in the search, such as latex gloves, screwdriver, plastic bags, flashlight, and a mirror.

If the inmate/detainee is present in the search area, frisk the inmate/detainee and then move him/her out of the area to be searched. This will reduce any conflict between the officers and the inmate/detainee who may object to his/her property being examined and searched.

Record accurately and completely all prohibited articles found during the search.

It is recommended that at least two officers conduct a cell search.

1. When entering a cell, stop and make a general survey and get an overall impression.

2. Select a starting point for the search, such as:

- a. Floor and all items on the floor.
- b. Ceiling.
- c. Wall opposite the entrance.

3. Search every item in one area before going to the next area.
4. Avoid damaging inmate's/detainee's property.
5. If contraband and/or weapon are found, confiscate it and place it in a plastic bag. Continue the search until the entire area is searched.
6. Remove all linens from the beds and examine them closely.
7. Examine the mattresses and pillows. Feel for objects that might be concealed.
8. Inspect ventilation ducts by removing the grills.
9. Probe inside faucets, drains, cell door cracks, or any opening for hidden articles.
10. Examine all books carefully.
11. Examine all personal letters and envelopes.
12. Examine all cigar boxes or any containers for false bottoms and compartments.
13. Unscrew light bulb and check faceplates.
14. Examine all small articles.

G. General Area Search

In searching common areas such as restrooms, recreational areas, multi-purpose rooms, day rooms, showers, vehicular sally port, booking area, library, commissary, prison industry, barber shop, non-contact, contact rooms, attorney rooms, main lobby, corridors, maintenance shop, kitchen, laundry, basketball court, and sally ports, remember the procedures and steps listed earlier.

H. Perimeter Search

The roving officer will walk around the perimeter area of the facility and observe the condition of the chain link fences, lights, entrances and gates. Any signs of tampering or abnormal conditions will be reported to the Shift Commander immediately and corrective action taken to ensure prison security is not breached. The roving officer will report burned-out light bulbs to the Assistant Shift Commander so that corrective actions will be taken as soon as possible. The roving officer will closely check articles on the ground as articles may be thrown over the fence.

I. Visitor Search

All visitors such as family members, attorneys, contract workers, and repairmen are subject to search. A visitor who refuses to be searched will be politely asked to leave the facility. No visitor will be stripped searched.

If there is reasonable suspicion that a visitor is carrying contraband and/or weapon, a consensual search may be undertaken using the frisk or pat down method of searching. The visitor will be advised that he/she is not under arrest and is free to leave the premises.

J. Bag Search

All bags brought into the facility are subject to search. To prevent bags from being searched, visitors will be informed that if possible, all bags should be left at home, in the vehicle and/or in one of the lockers provided until leaving the facility. Only articles allowed into the facility will be permitted. Prohibited articles will be denied entry.

K. Vehicular Traffic

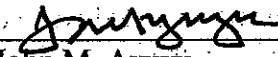
All vehicles entering the facility may be searched if there is reasonable suspicion that the vehicle is carrying contraband and/or weapons.


L. Supplies and Other Items


All supplies delivered to the facility may be searched before inmates/detainees and staff has access to them. Supplies and other items must be locked in a secured storage if not in use. All food items from the caterer may be searched if there is reasonable suspicion that contraband and/or weapons are being smuggled into the facility.

M. Disposition of Contraband

All contraband discovered during searches of visitors, inmates/detainees, and cells will be confiscated and delivered to the Shift Commander. A complete written report describing the contraband and when and where it was found must be submitted to the Shift Commander prior to the end of the shift. If contraband is associated with an inmate/detainee, an incident report will be submitted to the Shift Commander for his/her review. The Shift Commander will make a written recommendation to the Captain of Operations based on the incident report. When the contraband consist of controlled substances, weapons, firearms or may be evidence in a criminal matter, a chain of custody receipt must be established and forward the evidence to the evidence custodian at DPS.

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